

IV. IN THE CLAIMS

1. - 17. Canceled.

18. (New) A gutter hanger apparatus for engagement between the front portion and rear portion of a rain gutter having a generally U-shaped transverse cross-sectional shape and for additional engagement with a roof-supported cover extending toward said rain gutter, said gutter hanger apparatus comprising:

a support structure, said support structure having a front portion, a middle portion, and a rear portion,

a gutter engagement portion which extends upward from said front portion of said support structure,

a gutter cover engagement portion which extends upward from a middle portion of said support structure, wherein said gutter cover engagement portion is located at an elevated position relative to said gutter engagement portion, and

a support-fastener-reception portion which extends upward from said rear portion of said support structure,

wherein said support-fastener-reception portion includes a fastener-reception channel which extends downwardly and rearwardly obliquely with respect to said support structure,

wherein said support-fastener-reception portion

extends upwardly and rearwardly obliquely with respect to said support structure,

wherein said gutter engagement portion extends above said support structure by a first height, said gutter cover engagement portion extends above said bottom portion of said support structure by a second height, and said second height is greater than said first height,

wherein said support structure includes reinforcement means for reinforcing said gutter engagement portion and said gutter cover engagement portion,

wherein said reinforcement means comprise at least one transverse rib member extending obliquely between said support structure and said gutter cover engagement portion, at least one other transverse rib member extending obliquely between said support structure and said gutter cover engagement portion at an angle thereto, and a central transverse web member extending obliquely between said support structure and said gutter cover engagement portion, and

wherein said gutter cover engagement portion and said support-fastener-reception portion extending upwardly and rearwardly obliquely with respect to said support structure define a common concave connecting surface therebetween.

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